

Placer County Health and Human Services Department

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SPUTUM SPECIMEN COLLECTION INSTRUCTIONS

- 1. Brush teeth and rinse mouth before retiring.
- 2. Collect sputum immediately after waking in the morning.
- 3. <u>DO NOT</u> collect sputum immediately after a mouthwash.
- 4. Collect only the thick material coughed up from the lungs. <u>DO NOT</u> collect saliva.
- 5. A specimen of 2 to 10 ml. is adequate.
- 6. <u>Tighten cap on plastic tube after collection.</u> <u>Label with name and date of collection.</u>
- 7. Place tube in plastic bag with absorbent paper and seal bag by removing blue strip and folding over flap.
- 8. Deliver (<u>DO NOT MAIL</u>) specimens to the Public Health Laboratory as soon as possible. If a delay of even a few hours is unavoidable, keep specimen refrigerated.
- 9. Collect a series of three sputum specimens, 8 to 24 hours apart, at least one of which is an early morning specimen.
- 10. Sputum specimens collected on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, with delivery on Thursday, is the preferred timeframe; or collect on Saturday, Sunday and Monday with delivery on Monday. This will insure accurate results.